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The Upanishads:
A Historico-Philosophical Study.

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Author's Note.

Whatever merit this brief treatise upon a most difficult subject may have, it is the result of thirteen years of careful study and observation.

Authorities Consulted.

1. Monier Williams's Hinduism.
2. Monier Williams's Indian Wisdom.
3. Max Müller's History of Sanskrit Literature.
4. Max Müller's - The Upanishads.
5. Weber's History of Indian Literature.
6. Bose's Hindu Philosophy.
7. Wilkins's Hindu Mythology.
8. Dowson's Dictionary of Hindu Mythology.
9. Muir's Sanskrit Text.
10. Brockie's Indian Thought.
11. Wilson's Religious Sects.
12. Robson's Hinduism & its Relations to Christianity.
13. Macdonald's The Vedic Religion.
14. Davies' The Sánkhya Káriká of Íśwara Krishna.

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The Upanishads:
A Historico-Philosophical Study.

The natural home of Speculative philosophy is in the Orient. As the devout Moslem turns to Mecca, and the pious Jew to Jerusalem, so the profound philosopher must turn to the rising Sun for light. Even the subtile philosophies of Greece, Italy and Germany, of which so much is made, had a source from which they sprang, and had often been anticipated in the Speculations of the marvelously fruitful minds of the "Wise men of the East."(1) And while the Indo-European people have always been a race of philosophers, in the fore front have stood those dreamy Sages, who, leaving their abode in Central Asia, about the Sources of the Oxus, fifteen hundred

(1) For the influence of Pantheism upon European thought - see Hindú Philosophy by Bábú Rám Chandra Base. (p. 9)

years before the advent of Christ, found their way into "the Land of the Five Waters", and peopled the broad valleys of the Indus, the Ganges, and the Brahmaputra. As has been well said, "The audacious Sons of Japhet, boldest of the daring race that ever yearns and longs, with ceaseless quenchless thirst, to rush into forbidden mysteries, have in all ages been trying to form rational, comprehensible theories with regard to Superhuman beings and things, and now have gone further this way than the Hindús, not even the Germans." (2) And those dusky Brahmans, devoid as they were of that higher philosophy the "new theology" revealed in Jesus Christ, have succeeded well. Rising from its careful study, one is almost forced to admit, what the superficial reader would naturally repudiate, especially when dominated by Occidental prejudice, that "Hindú philosophy is fully as logical and profound as any of the Systems of old Greece and Rome, such as the Pythagórean, Stoic, Sophistic, Socratic, Platonic, Cynic, Aristotelian, Epicurean, or Alexandrian. Th

(2) Brockie's Indian Thought. p. 18.

does not come very far short, perhaps, of the most approved modern systems. In its fundamental aspects, it has very much in common with these. Our Lockes, Berkeleys, Kants, Fichtés, Hegels, Mills, Cousins, Hamiltons, and Bains had their forerunners and counterparts in Kapala, Patanjali, Vyâsa, Śankara Achârya, and others, equally eminent in their part of the world, ranging in date from eight or ten centuries before Christ — to take the most moderate computation. The systems propounded by these illustrious Brahmans display fully as much metaphysical acuteness as any of those now accepted among ourselves."(3)

The profound study of any philosophy is profitable. It must prove fascinating also when one seeks out the philosophy underlying the ancient faith of a branch of his own family, especially when that faith is held by millions of souls today. It is with some such feelings as these that we come to the study of the Upanishads — those esoteric philosophical treatises of our Aryan brethren peopleing the great plains of India; and to know that

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(3) Brockie's Indian Thought. p. 7. See Robson's quotation from Ballantyne in Hinduism and its Relation to Christianity, p. 5.

these people are ethnically those with whom our ancestors once abode, and that today near two hundred millions of them crowd the fruitful valleys and plains of Hindustán, is quite sufficient to arouse our interest and pique our curiosity.

The study of the Upanishads is essential to a correct knowledge and understanding of Hindu philosophy. Bábú Rám Mohan Roy,(4) himself one of India's noblest sons, considered the Upanishads as worthy to become the foundation of a new religion, and has said that "The adoration of the invisible supreme Being is exclusively prescribed in the Upanishads, or the principal parts of the Vedas, and even went so far as to assert that if any portion of the Vedas themselves contradicted the pure doctrine of the Upanishads it must be rejected; and it is a noto-worthy fact that these treatises are almost the only part of the Vedas

(4) Bábú Rám Mohan Roy was professedly a reformer of the Brahmanical Creed, and translated several of the leading Upanishads into Bengali and English, and died while on a visit to England in 1833.

literature extensively read at the present day,[5] and as Monier Williams well says: "The doctrine contained in these treatises does in fact lie under the whole Hindu System",[6] so that one might as well attempt to learn the Sanskrit language without a Sanskrit Grammar as to expect to become a master of Indian philosophy without an acquaintance with that common source from which it sprang.

What, then, are the Upanishads? And what do they teach? In order to answer these questions intelligibly it is necessary to revert to the etymological signification of the word. But even among the Pundits themselves there is

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(5) See Max Müller's Sanskrit Literature, p. 316. When translations of some of the Upanishads were introduced into Germany the philosopher Schopenhauer, (1788–1860,) whose philosophy was transitional from the Kantian Idealism to the present Realism. (Ueberweg.) received them with delight and said they would revolutionize European thought.
(6) Monier Williams's Hinduism. p. 43.

Confusion as to the root signification of the compound term Upanishad, some arguing that its etymological meaning is "Mystery,"(7) and some giving it the some what artificial definition of "Distruction of Passion or Ignorance by means of Divine Revelation,"(8) while others hold to the more literal rendering, implying "A Session, A Lecture."(9) All, however, would admit the Upanishads to be Śruti, or divine revelation of the strictest kind(10) in contradistinction from Smriti, or "that which is remembered, or handed down by tradition", and this can be traced in the syllables of the word, namely, the root Sad - "to sit down" - with the prepositions Upa - "near" and ni - "down" - and the implication is that of sitting down and performing worship, or of sitting down near one, as a pupil or inferior sits near a teacher or Superior, in order to listen, and

(7) Rahasya, or Guhyâ âdeśâh - mystery.
(8) Max Müller's Sanskrit Literature. p. 318. Bose's Hindu Philosophy. p. 10
(9) Weber's Indian Literature. p. 28.
(10) This "knowledge" (Veda) was thought to have issued like breath from Brahman and was itself considered Self existent.

meditate, and worship,[11] and so the transition is easy to the idea of implicit faith, and finally to the Truth, or Divine Revelation.[12] And thus we reach the literal significance of the Upanishads. They are the "esoteric doctrine" of Brahmanism. They contain the very cream and essence of divine revelation. They belong to that department of the Vedas called Jaṇâna Kâṇḍa,[13] instead of to the Karma Kâṇḍa, or "department of works," and hence how to do with the highest forms of knowledge, and were only intended for the select few[14] who could understand the true doctrine.

In order to understand the position occupied by the Upani-

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(11) The following passage from the Rig Veda (IX:11.6) contains the idea of the leading work: Sâmasâ ít sípa sîdata – "Approach him with praise."

(12) Max Müller's Sanskrit Literature. pp. 318-319.

(13) Jaṇâna Kâṇḍa – "department of knowledge" – Latin, Scientiae cognitio; literally, "knowledge of science." Jaṇâna is from the Sanskrit jnâ – know. Jijnâsa, from the same root, is the equivalent of the Greek Φιλοσοφία – desire for knowledge. (Brockie)

(14) It was considered a most grave offense for a single word of the Vedas to be heard by any but a Brahman.

shades in Sanskrit Sacred literature[15] it is necessary to remark that each of the four Vedas, viz., the Rig, the Yajur, the Sáma and the Atharva[16] is divided into two leading parts, namely, a Sanhita, or Collection of Mantras, or hymns and prayers to the deified forces of nature, such as Agni, Indra, and Surya,[17] and a Brahmana, or ritual for the guidance of priests, which latter stands somewhat in the same relation to the Sanhita that the Talmud does to the Law except that both are looked upon as in the highest sense inspired. Certain chapters of the

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(15) Sanskrit Literature may be said to consist of four Vedas, Six Sástras, and eighteen Puránas, together with two Epics, the Mahabhárata and the Ramáyana.

(16) The Rig Veda from "rich" "praise" Consists of hymns. The Sáma from "sho" "destroy" teaches how to destroy sin. The Yajur from yajna "Sacrifice" instructs how to sacrifice. The Atharva signifies "the eldest son of Brahma". (17) "There are three deities, according to the expounders of the Vedas: Agni whose place is on the earth; Váyu, or Indra, whose place is in the air; and Surya, whose place is in the sky." (Yaska, perhaps the oldest Commentator on the Vedas, quoted by Muir and Wilkins.)

Brahmanas are called Aranyakas[18] because they are considered so awe inspiring that they were required to be read in the solitude of the forest. To these Aranyakas were appended the Upanishads to "expound the mystical sense of some of the ceremonies, and discuss the nature of the God-head, and the means of acquiring religious knowledge with a view to final liberation."[19]

Although in comparatively recent times[20] these treatises have so multiplied that they are now more than one hundred and fifty in number,[21] yet there are some which on account of their age and teachings are of primary importance. The ten leading Upanishads may be divided into Major and Minor, the two Major being the Chhandogya, belonging to the Sáma Veda, and the Brihad Aranyaka to the White Yajur Veda. The eight Minor Upanishads are the Aitareya, belonging to the Rig Veda, the Taittiriya,

(18) Aranyakas - "Belonging to the forest."
(19) Muir's Old Sanskrit Text. Vol. I. p. 2.
(20) It is said there is even an Allah Upanishad!
(21) Max Müller mentions 108, but Weber, 235.

belonging to the Black Yajur Veda, the Isa, belonging to the White Yajur Veda, the Kena, belonging to the Sáma Veda, and the Prashna, the Katha, the Mundaka and the Mandukya belonging to the Atharva Veda.

It is impossible to give anything more than an approximate date for the writing of these older Upanishads, as the early Hindús ignored Chronology, but it is safe to say that none of them date further back than the eighth century before Christ.(22) Their authors, also, are unknown, for naturally enough, in order to enhance their mystical character, all trace of human authorship would be omitted. Their great Commentator was Sánkara Achárya, one of India's most profound thinkers as well as most voluminous writers, who flourished in the latter part of the seventh and early part of the eighth century of our era. They have all been made accessible to English readers, having been translated, partly by Bábú Rám Mohan Roy and Dr. Rajendra Lall Mittra, and others, and entirely by Dr. Röer

(22) Monier Williams and Dowson say 600 B.C. but it is difficult to reconcile the philosophy Kapala with so recent a date.

in the Bibliotheca Indica.[23]

We come now to the discussion of the other and more difficult question, viz., What do the Upanishads teach? To make this clear it is necessary to notice how they grew up. It is very probable that at least the earlier ones, had, like the Gospels, an oral form before they were committed to writing. In the gradual development of these philosophical writings do we observe the characteristic, before noted, of the Indo-Germanic race to study the Science of principles and seek an explanation of the causes of things; and especially did the Subjective Brahmans puzzle and speculate and dream over many profound questions not treated of in their most ancient Sacred Scriptures. Especially was that the case in that marvelously speculative period about five or six centuries before Christ, when, in various and widely separated lands, great philosophers, such as Pythagoras, Zoroaster, Buddha and Confucius, arose and formulated their Systems. In India, perhaps earlier than that, such profound questions as the origin of the Universe, the nature of the deity,

(23) See also The Upanishads, by Max Müller.

the nature of the soul, the relation between matter and spirit, "whence am I? What am I? Whither am I destined?" were pressing themselves for an answer. But to these questionings neither the Mantras to the weird and wonderful nature gods, nor the Brahmanas with their ritualistic service, could give any satisfactory reply. And yet such queries must be answered. The second, or Warrior Caste, (Kshatriyas[24]) that noble clan that gave a Buddha to the world, were the first to enter upon rationalistic speculation. But even those not considered the "twice born" nor permitted to wear the sacred cord[25] (Janeu) would essay to formulate some answer to questions of such moment to the human soul. Must all, as Śākya Muni afterwards did, turn sceptics and reformers? More than likely the dominieering Brahmans, ever on the alert to maintain their place at the head of the hierarchy, were forced by circumstances, if not naturally inclined, to enlarge their creed by

(24) There are four leading divisions of Hindu society, namely, Brāhmans, (priests) Kshatriyas, (soldiers) Vaiśyas (merchants) and Śūdras (farmers)

(25) Only the three "upper," "twice born," castes are permitted to wear the sacred thread.

giving answer to some of the profoundest philosophical queries that have ever occupied the thoughts of men. And thus the Upanishads, and afterwards the Six Śástras, grew up. These Upanishads, although loaded down with many puerilities and wild speculative aphorisms, are yet free from Brahmanical exclusiveness and sectarian narrowness in their tenets, and "contain the beginnings of that metaphysical inquiry which ended in the full development of Hindu philosophy"(25) into the Shat Śástras, or "Six Instruments of True Teaching", and occupy a unique place between the later and the earlier parts of the Vedas.

The limits of this thesis forbids more than a cursory glance at this great subject before passing to the discussion of that more systematic philosophy embodied in the Six Śástras. The underlying principle or thought in the Upanishads is pantheistic. Take, for instance, the doctrine of God as universally taught in the older treatises. It may be stated in three Sanskrit words of mighty import, viz., "Ekam eva adwitiyam". There is but one Being, no second. This, the very core and substance of the Vedas, the uncompro-

(26) Dowson.

rising creed of Brahmanism, is fundamental to the leading Upanishads. As an illustration of this pantheistic doctrine, and at the same time to show something of the style of these works, take this extract from the Isa Upanishad:

"Whatever exists within this universe
Is all to be regarded as enveloped
By the great Lord, as if wrapped in a vesture.
There is one only Being who exists
Unmoved, yet moving swifter than the mind;
Who far outstrips the Senses, though as gods
They strive to reach him; who, himself at rest,
Transcends the fleetest flight of other beings;
Who, like the air, supports all vital action.
He moves, yet moves not; he is far, yet near;
He is within this universe. Whoever beholds
All living creatures as in him and him—
The universal Spirit—as in all,
Henceforth regards no creature with contempt." (27.)

(27.) From Monier Williams's Indian Wisdom. p.38.

The great problems of the nature of God, the nature of man, and the origin of things were always interesting to the Indo-Aryan. Thus the Śvetāśvatara Upanishad starts out with the questions: "Is Brahman the Cause? Whence are we born? By what do we live? Whither do we go? At whose Command do we walk after the Law, in happiness and misery? Is time the cause, or nature, or law, or chance, or the elements? Is man to be taken as the source of all?"(28.) Nor need it cause surprise that in the Upanishads these queries have received various answers for have not various answers been given to them by Occidental philosophers of larger conceit if not of profounder thought? We turn to the Chhāndogya Upanishad and read: "In the beginning there was the mere state of being (τὸ ὄν) — one only without a second. Some, however, say that in the beginning there was the state of non-being (τὸ μὴ ὄν) — one only without a second. Hence out of a state of non-being would proceed a state of being. But, of

(28) Max Müller's Sanskrit Literature. p. 321.

a truth, how can this be? How can being (τὸ ὄν) proceed out of non-being? In the beginning, there, there was the mere state of being — one only without a second. It willed, 'I shall multiply and be born.' It created heat. That heat willed, 'I shall multiply and be born.' It created water. The water willed 'I shall multiply and be born.' It created aliment. Therefore wherever rain falls much aliment is produced. That deity willed, 'Entering these three divinities in a living form, I shall develop name and form.'[29]"

(29) Sad eva idam agre ásíd, ekam eva advitíyam. Tad ha eke áhur asad eva eva idam agre ásíd, ekam eva advitíyam, tasmád asataḥ saj jáyeta. Kutas tu khalu syád iti, katham asataḥ saj jáyeta iti. Sat tv eva idam agre ásíd ekam eva advitíyam. Tad aikshata bahu syám prajáyeya iti, tat tejo asṛijata. Tat teja aikshata bahu syám prajáyeya iti, tad apo asṛijata. Tá ápa aikshanta bahvaḥ syáma prajáyemahi iti tá annam asṛijanta. Tasmád yatra kva ca varshati tad eva bhúyishṭham annam bhavati. Sá iyam devatá aikshata, aham imás tisro devatá jívena átmaná anupraviśya náma-rúpe vyákaraváni iti. Chándogya Upanishad, VI: 2.

The Bahvrcha Upanishad answers the cosmological question by asserting that: "In the beginning this (world) was Self (Âtman) alone, there was nothing else winking. He thought, 'Let me create the worlds,' and he created these worlds." But in the Śvetâśvatâra Upanishad it is stated that Delusion (Mâyâ) is the great principle under which even God himself exists. The Taittiriya Upanishad has a third theological and cosmological tenet, viz., that Brahman (neuter) is the Source of all things — of the ether, the air, fire, water, earth, plants, food, seed, and body, or man.[30] But these various views can all be reconciled if we bear in mind the fact that those who spoke of the Creator as Self (Âtman) had in view a personal Being and those who used Brahman thought more of the neuter idea of Power; and even Delusion (Mâyâ) signified a power of the Divine Self (Âtman) as heat is a power of fire. So that Śâṇḍilya had not far to seek to find the outcome that the Self (Âtman) within us is Brahman and that we are a part (ans) of the All Pervading thus establishing the formula Ekam eva advitîyam.

(30) Purusha.

Let us now find the further teachings of the Upanishads in the six Śástras, or Schools of philosophy, which developed from them. These six Schools may be divided into three Systems of two Schools each, viz., (I.) The Dualistic System under which are found the Sankhya, or Rational philosophy of Kâpala, and the Yoga, or Ascetic philosophy of Patanjali. (II.) The Sensational System embracing the Nyáya, or Dialectical philosophy of Gotama, and the Vaiśeshika, or Atomic philosophy of Kaṇáda. (III.) The Monistic System, including the Mimánsá, or Ritualistic philosophy of Jaimini, and the Vedánta, or Pantheistic philosophy of Vyása. These various Schools might be still more broadly divided into the Dualistic, or those affirming the Coexistence of two eternal principles, as the Sánkhya, the Yoga and the Vaiśeshika, and the Non-Dualistic, or those affirming the Unity of all being, as the Vedánta. Still another classification might be made, dividing them into Rational and Mystical, the former assuming the two-fold Character of Materialistic and Spiritualistic. And if the Student of Hindu Philosophy were disposed to be critical, he might decide that there is really but one philosophy worthy of

the name and that is the Sánkhya of Kapala.

We now proceed to briefly set forth the leading tenets of each of these six systems of philosophy with a view to the purification of the whole.

I. The Sankhya philosophy was founded by Kapala about twenty five hundred years ago, and is, in some of its phases at least, the most popular and wide spread system in India today, the cosmogony of Manu presenting a process of evolution very similar, and even Buddhism was more influenced by, and has more in common with it, than with any other. The word Sánkhya[31] implies a process of reasoning, and the system like that of Descartes, lays down Reason as the only sure ground of conviction and belief, which came through four sources, viz., Perception, Inference, Tradition and Revelation. The first principles of all things are two, namely, Matter and Spirit, the results of a synthesis of various Categories or Entities. It teaches that impure matter can not come from pure Spirit, and holds to the doctrine of Návastuno vastu siddhih, ex nihilo nihil fit. In its primordial material

(31.) Sánkhya, from Sam- together, and khyá- reason.

principle (Prakriti)[32] is joined a trinity of eternal principles, called Cords (gunas) because they bind the soul, namely, Goodness, (sattva,) Passion, (Rajas,) and Darkness, (Tamas.) Out of this eternal Germ (Prakriti) are evolved twenty three Substances, or entities, forming a visible world for the Soul, (purusha,) which has a separate eternal existence but is inactive and without qualities. The object of this philosophical system is to liberate the Soul (purusha) from the bondage consequent upon its union with matter, (Prakriti.)

II. Patanjali's system, forming the Yoga[33] philosophy, is really an apendix to that of Kapala but claims to be more orthodox, being more directly theistic than that of the latter. The purpose of this philosophy is to show how the human soul, (jívátman,) can obtain complete union with the universal Spirit, (purusha,) and its method is by

(33.) Yoga, from Yaj- unite. Yoga unites man to God.

(32) Monier Williams says that the translation nature, given by some scholars for Prakriti, is incorrect, for the word implies more an Evolver or Producer. (Hinduism. p. 195; Note.)

the complete suppression of the passions, (vairágya,) and perpetual passivity of mind or concentration of thought upon nothing. By this complete abstraction, by repetitions of the mystical monosyllable "Oum", by contortions of the body, by mortification of the flesh, and by a thousand unique penances, the Yogis seek to effect a union with the great Brahma. This philosophy has a great fascination for the naturally contemplative and ascetical Hindú, and its zealous disciples may be found practicing its inhuman requirements in every part of India.

III. The Nyaya[34] school is analytic in its method, thereby differing from the Sánkhya which, as we have seen, is synthetic. Moreover its basis is decidedly ideal & its method of dialectics original and independent of the Aristotelian. While it is primarily a system of Logic, yet it is supposed to treat of a correct method of inquiry into all subjects of human thought. Sixteen topics are discussed, the first of which is the way to obtain right knowledge, (pramána,) and the second

(34) Nyáya signifies "Entry into a subject."

discusses the twelve subjects about which right knowledge is to be obtained. (Prameya.) The fourteen other topics show the stages through which Controversy is likely to pass. The key to the philosophy is, that all misery in the world is due to false notions; for, from them come feelings, and from feelings actions, and from actions demerits, which necessitates repeated births, from which proceeds misery. So that the Aim of the philosophy is to Correct false notions and so escape bondage, or misery.

IV. The Vaiśeshika[35] philosophy is supplementary to the Nyaya proper, as the Yoga is to the Sánkhya, and is more of a development of it than a separate philosophy, extending the system to physical investigation. It is also interesting because of its similarity to some phases of European thought - to the Aristotelian Categories, and the Atomic theory propounded by Leucippus and Democritus of Abdera, and the Kantian ideas of Time and Space, although the differences also are marked. It arranges its inquiries under the six Categories of Substance, Attribute,

(35) Vaiśehika = atomic.

Action, Generality, Particularity, and Inhesion, which are again subdivided; as, for instance, the first, viz., Substances consists of nine parts: Earth, Water, Light, Air, Ether, Time, Space, Soul, and Mind. (Manas.) Its Cosmology is the result of "the Unseen Force." (Adrishta.) derived from the works and actions of a previous world, acting through and upon an aggregation of eternal atoms. The philosophy further teaches the existence of the individual souls of men as separate, eternal and all diffused entities, so that it, like Nyaya proper, is dualistic, positing eternal atoms side by side with eternal Souls.

V. The Mimánsa[36] school of Jaimini is a method of Vedic interpretation rather than a system of philosophy, and hence is sometimes called, in distinction from the Vedánta, "Purva-Mimánsa," "an inquiry into the former portion of the Vedas", i.e. into the Mantra, or Hymns, and Brahmanas, or Ritualistic Directory. There is, however, a philosophy in the interpretation. Its aim is to solve the doubts, errors, and discrepancies as to the sacred text, introduced by

(36) Mimánsa signifies Interpretation.

discordant and opposing schools in their interpretation of the Vedas, the explanation of this school being literal and without reference to occult or mystical teachings. And so highly are those sacred books regarded, that both Reason and God are put aside, and the Vedas themselves are practically deified. Desire to know Duty (Dharma) is the leading impulse and guiding motive of life, to which knowledge man can come only by the faithful and constant study of the Vedas.

VII. Of all the schools, the Vedánta[37] of Vyása is founded most directly upon the teachings of the Upanishads, and hence is the truest exponent of Brahmanism, both of the earliest and of the latest times. It also offers many parallels to the Idealism of Plato, and reminds one of some phases of German thought. Its creed is extremely simple, and upon that creed, the definite formula- Ekam eva advitiyam- "One only Essence, without a Second" is founded the whole system. In other words it may be stated to be: "All this universe indeed is Brahma;

(37) Vedanta is from Veda- knowledge, and Anta- end.

from him does it proceed; into him is it dissolved; in him it breathes. So let every one adore him calmly."
As we have before seen.[38] this is precisely the teaching of the Isa Upanishad. Here is a unique Cosmology. We saw that the Nyáya philosophy taught the origin of the world from the Concurrence of eternal atoms, and the Sánkhya from an original eternal substance called Prakriti — both independent of and distinct from eternal souls. But the Vedánta philosophy affirms the unity of all being, and denies the existence of the material universe, and teaches that the great object of all finite being is to attain freedom from the distressing delusion, (Máyá) under which, through the self imposed ignorance of the Supreme Spirit, all things exist, and to gain eternal union with the impersonal Source of all. The soul, it is boldly asserted, can obtain this liberation only through a proper understanding of truth by means of the Vedánta philosophy.

(38.) Page 14.

Here, then, in these six schools of Hindú philosophy, but very briefly and imperfectly outlined, above, may be found formulated those fundamental doctrines underlying the older Upanishads. The Upanishads are the source of all. And in confirmation of their primary importance to Indo-Aryan thought the words of Prof. Max Müller may here be quoted: "The chief interest which the Áranyakas possess at the present moment consists in their philosophy. The philosophical chapters, well known under the name of the Upanishads, are almost the only portion of the Vedic literature which is extensively read to this day. They contain, or are supposed to contain, the highest authority on which the various systems of philosophy in India rest. Not only the Vedánta philosopher, who, by his very name, professes his faith in the ends and objects of the Veda, but the Sánkhya the Vaiśeshika, the Nyáya, and the Yoga philosophers, all pretend to find in the Upanishads some warranty for their tenets, however antagonistic in their bearing. The same applies to the numerous sects that have existed and still exist in India. Their founders, if they have any pretentions to orthodoxy, invariably appeal to some

passage in the Upanishads in order to substantiate their own reasonings.(37.)

It only remains to make a brief summary of the agreements found in these various philosophies that we may have a unified and comprehensive view of the fundamental tenets of the treatises under consideration and get the leading thought in the mind of the Hindusim of today. Abstracting the peculiar differences, these systems may be found, in their ultimate essence, to teach (I.) The belief in the eternity of matter and of the soul. (II.) The necessary union of soul and body in order to the conscious existence and rational activity of the former. (III.) The necessary bondage and misery of the soul due to its union with the body. (IV.) The necessity of regulated and limited rewards and punishments prior to absorption. (V.) A more or less tedious progress towards final absorption. (VI.) Metempsychosis as the explanation of the existence of evil, with the hope of final absorption. (Sáyujya.) Matter must

(37.) Max Müller's Sanskrit Literature. pp. 316-317.

be eternal, for whether the philosopher be a materialist of the Sánkhya or Vaiśeshika schools, or a Vedantist of the strictest sect, something must be posited as the Source of things, for his doctrine is Ásvastuno Vastusiddhih — ex nihilo nihil fit.[39] Both the Supreme Soul, (Paramátman.)[40] and the individual soul, (Jívátmans.) are eternal entities having always existed and must live forever.[41] And although the soul is pure thought it can not exercise its thought until associated with organs of sensation, and especially with the mind, (Manas.) the internal organ of sense. The union of soul and body must produce bondage and misery, for only thus does the soul become conscious of existence and of impressions, all of which lead to action, which in turn, produces bondage and, in human souls, misery.[42] The re-

(39). As the Greeks — Οὐδὲν γίνεται ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος.

(40) All the Schools, however, do not agree as to the Supreme Soul.

(41) Although, like the Vedantists, the philosopher may believe in Emanation & Reabsorption, yet the soul lived and will live in Brahma.

(42) Even animals have souls, and each person has two bodies, one the gross body, (Sthúla-śaríra.) and the other the subtle body, (Linga-śaríra.) which latter accompanies the soul until its final emancipation.

cessity for rewards and punishments[43] is the result of action, but they are never final,[44] for the soul must again and again return to corporeal existence,[45] in its onward movement towards Complete union with the Universal Source (Brahma.) But these transmigrations through bodies produce evil, for no soul can come into contact with matter without taint.[46]

It should be carefully noted that in this whole system of philosophy evil and misery are due primarily to Action which brings the embodied soul into bondage and misery, hence the soul seeking deliverance must strive to cease from all action, whether good or bad, and thus lose all sense of individual, personal existence. Ask a Hindu

(43) There are twenty one hells and seven heavens of special note.

(44) Final absorption must be distinguished from the treatment the soul receives en route.

(45) A striking figure is that of an emptied grease pot which still has grease clinging to it; so the soul must return in order that the consequences of acts be entirely worked out.

(46) The belief in the inherence of evil in matter is not peculiar to India.

philosopher "What must I do to be saved?" and he will reply, as one of the Sages[47] has done: "The recluse, pondering the teacher's words, 'Thou art the Supreme Being', and receiving the text of the Vedas, 'I am God', hearing thus in three several ways — by the teacher's precept, by the word of God, by his own Contemplation — persuaded himself 'I am God', obtains Liberation." And this Liberation[48] is the summum bonum of all Hindu philosophy. Its great problem is: Given man, an emanation from the Supreme, born into a state of delusion, and in consequence of his bodily connection, of bondage and misery, to find the Highest God in Complete and eternal Liberation by re absorption into the unthinking, unfeeling, unconscious Source of his evolution.

In the light of Christian Truth how unsatisfactory, unpractical, dreamy and ascetical the highest Indian Wisdom appears, and how little there is in its own ends to benefit the world. The disciple of the Upanishads dreads and shuns Activity. The reader of the New Testament seeks to be "A Workman that

(47) Sankar Acharya. (48) Mukti.

needeth not to be ashamed."(49) The Hindú in his Studied Abstraction loves the solitude of the forest and the seclusion of the monastery. But the true Christian shines in the public walks of life ever to be "not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."(50) Hinduism can give no higher advice than is found in this extract from one of India's most popular Epics:(51)

Let him, if seeking God by deep abstraction,
Abandon his possessions and his hopes,
Betake himself to some secluded spot,
And fix his heart and thoughts on God alone.
There let him choose a seat, not high nor low,
And with a cloth or skin to cover him,
And kuśa grass beneath him, let him sit
Firm and erect, his body, head and neck
Straight and immovable, his eyes directed
Towards a single point, not looking round,
Devoid of passion, free from anxious thought,
His heart restrained, and deep in meditation.
Even as a tortoise draws its head and feet
Within its shell, so must he keep his organs

(49) II Tim. II: 15. (50) Rom. XII: 11. (51) The Bhágavad Gita.

Withdrawn from sensual objects. He whose senses
Are well controlled attains to sacred knowledge,
And thence attains tranquility of thought.
Without quiescence there can be no bliss.
Even as a storm tossed ship upon the waves,
So is the man whose heart obeys his passions,
Which, like the winds, will hurry him away.
Quiescence is the state of the Supreme.
He who, intent on meditation, joins
His soul with the Supreme, is like a flame
That flickers not when sheltered from the wind."

How much more practical is the penitent cry and exultant shout of Paul: "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me out of the body of this death? (Το σώμα του θανάτου τούτου — dead body - prakriti) I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord;"(52) Or the apostolic advice: "Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord;"(53) Or

(52) Rom. VII: 24-25. (53) I Cor. XV:58.

the song of Longfellow:

"Let us then be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate,
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait";

or the hymn of Doddridge:

"Awake, my soul! stretch every nerve,
And press with vigor on;
A heavenly race demands thy zeal,
And an immortal crown."

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